



ANTHOCHLERA LUNULATA: *Coold.*

ANTHOCHÆRA LUNULATA, *Gould.*

Lunulated Wattle-Bird.

Anthochæra lunulata, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part v. p. 153 ; and in Syn. Birds of Australia, Part IV.

Djüng-gung, Aborigines of the lowland, and

Tur-dal-l, Aborigines of the mountain districts of Western Australia.

Little Wattle-Bird, Colonists of Swan River.

THIS species is very nearly allied to the *Anthochæra mellivora*, but differs from that bird in the greater length of its bill, in the entire absence of the striæ down the head and the back of the neck, and in the possession of a lunulate mark of white on either side of the neck. Its natural habitat is Western Australia, where it generally frequents the Banksias bordering rivers and lakes, and in fact all situations similar to those resorted to by its near ally: it is to be found in every part of the colony, but appears to be more abundant in the neighbourhood of Swan River and the lakes in its vicinity than elsewhere. In its habits it is very solitary and shy, and is moreover very pugnacious, attacking every bird, both large and small, that approaches its domicile.

Its flight is rapid and uneven, and its general note is a discordant cackling sound, resembling an attempt to sing, of the most disagreeable description.

A remarkable circumstance connected with the incubation of this bird is, that it appears to lay but a single egg, and it moreover appears to have no regular time of breeding, its nest being found in abundance from August to November. It is rather small in size, and is deposited in the fork of a perpendicular growing branch: the tree most generally chosen is that called by the colonists of Swan River the stink-wood, but it has been found in the parasitic clump of a Banksia, and also in a small scrubby bush two or three feet from the ground; but it is more frequently constructed at a height of at least eight or twelve. It is formed of dried sticks, and lined with *Zamia* wool, soft grasses or flowers, and sometimes with sheep's wool. The egg is rather lengthened in form, being one inch and two lines long by nine and a half lines broad; its ground colour is a full reddish buff, thinly spotted and marked with deep chestnut-brown and chestnut-red, some of the spots and markings appearing as if beneath the surface of the shell, and being most thickly disposed near the larger end.

The stomach, which is slightly muscular, is diminutive in size, and the food consists of honey and insects of various kinds, with which the young when hatched are also fed by the parent birds.

The female is considerably smaller than her mate, but does not differ in the colouring of her plumage.

Crown of the head, back of the neck, and upper part of the back olive-brown, the feathers being darkest in the middle; lower part of the back and rump olive-brown, each feather having a line of white down the stem, dilated into a spot at the extremity; upper tail-coverts olive-brown, with a crescent-shaped mark of white at the tip; primaries brown, the inner webs for nearly their whole length deep chestnut; secondaries and tertiaries brown margined with grey; two middle tail-feathers greyish brown, very slightly tipped with white, the remainder dark brown largely tipped with white; feathers of the sides of the neck long, narrow, pointed, and of a silvery grey; throat and forepart of the neck greyish brown, with a round silvery grey spot at the extremity of each feather; feathers of the chest and under surface greyish brown, with a fine line of white down the centre, dilated into an oblong spot at the extremity, the white predominating on the hinder part of the abdomen and under tail-coverts; on each side of the chest an oblique mark of pure white; irides bright hazel; bill blackish brown; feet and legs yellowish grey, the former the darkest and with a tinge of olive.

The figures are of the natural size.